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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON SECURITY IN THE RWANDESE REFUGEE CAMPS

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of the statement of the President of the Security Council dated 14 October 1994 (PRST/1994/59), which noted the Council's concern at the plight of the millions of Rwandese refugees and displaced persons, reiterated the view that their return to their homes was essential for the normalization of the situation in Rwanda and deplored the continuing acts of intimidation and violence within the refugee camps, which were designed to prevent the refugee population there from returning home.

2. In my report on the situation in Rwanda dated 6 October (S/1994/1133), I indicated that, as a result of his visit to Zaire from 12 to 14 September, my Special Representative for Rwanda, Mr. Shaharyar Khan, concluded that the most effective way of ensuring the safety of the refugees and their freedom to return to Rwanda would be the separation of political leaders, former Rwandese government forces and militia from the rest of the refugee population. I also noted, however, that that would be a difficult and complex undertaking, especially as those to be separated would be likely to resist, and incite others to resist, any attempt to relocate them. In order to address more fully the problems associated with separating the former Rwandese government forces' political leaders, military and militia from the refugees, and to evaluate the logistic and other requirements involved, a joint Zairian/United Nations working group was established, composed of officials of the Government of Zaire, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). A technical team from the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) was sent to Zaire to join the working group. In my report of 6 October, I also indicated that my Special Representative had recommended that attention be focused, as a matter of priority, on the camps in Zaire, where the problems were significantly more acute than in those established in the United Republic of Tanzania. Accordingly, the present report addresses mainly the issue of security in the camps located in Zaire.

3. In his statement of 14 October, the President of the Security Council noted that the Council looked forward to receiving a further report from me on this

issue, based, inter alia, on the findings of the UNAMIR technical team participating in the joint Zairian/United Nations working group. The joint working group was established at Kinshasa on 26 September and concluded its site visits on 11 October. The UNAMIR technical team returned to Kigali on 14 October and subsequently submitted its report to my Special Representative.

4. Following consultations between the Secretariat and UNHCR on possible options for addressing the security situation in the camps, I convened a high-level meeting at Geneva on 8 November, which focused on various aspects of the crisis in Rwanda and most importantly on the situation in the refugee camps. The meeting was attended by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Executive Director of the World Food Programme, the Under-Secretaries-General for Political Affairs and for Humanitarian Affairs, the Legal Counsel, one of my special advisers, my Special Representatives for Rwanda and Burundi, my Special Humanitarian Envoy for Rwanda and Burundi, the Military Adviser in the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and a representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

5. The meeting concluded that the most urgent problems were the security in the camps and the Government's need for support to enable it to carry out its functions. It was agreed that those problems must be addressed under an overall strategy leading to the repatriation and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons. The meeting also concluded that longer-term efforts, including efforts on a regional basis, towards national reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction of the country should contribute to the resolution of the more urgent problems related to the safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

II. PRESENT SITUATION IN THE RWANDESE REFUGEE CAMPS IN ZAIRE

A. Conditions in the camps

6. An estimated 1.2 million people fled Rwanda over a four-day period in mid-July to the Kivu region of Zaire, in one of the largest and most sudden movements of refugees in modern history. UNHCR estimates that there are 850,000 refugees in north Kivu, in the Goma areas of Mugunga, Kibumba and Katale, and about 370,000 in south Kivu, in the Bukavu and Uvira areas. The camps, which sprawl over miles, are overcrowded, chaotic and increasingly insecure. The refugees live in makeshift huts and are completely dependent on United Nations and relief agencies for basic needs assistance.

7. The former Rwandese political leaders, Rwandese government forces soldiers and militia control the camps, though the degree of control varies from area to area. They are determined to ensure by force, if necessary, that the refugees do not repatriate to Rwanda. They also make it difficult for relief agencies to carry out their work in safety, because they attempt to control the agencies' activities in the camps and prevent relief supplies from reaching those in need. It is believed that these elements may be preparing for an armed invasion of Rwanda and that they may be stockpiling and selling food distributed by relief agencies in preparation for such an invasion. There have already been some

cross border incursions. Security is further undermined by general lawlessness, extortion, banditry and gang warfare between groups fighting for control of the camps. As a result of these threats to security, non-governmental organizations responsible for the distribution of relief supplies in the camps have begun to withdraw.

8. There are approximately 230 Rwandese political leaders in Zaire, including former ministers, senior civilian and military officials, members of parliament and other political personalities, many of whom live in good conditions in hotels and houses outside the refugee camps. With their dependants, they amount to about 1,200 persons. These leaders exert a hold on the refugees through intimidation and the support of military personnel and militia members in the camps.

9. Estimates of the number of former Rwandese government forces personnel in Zaire differ but they probably amount to about 50,000 persons, including dependants. In south Kivu, they are located in two separate military camps. In north Kivu, on the other hand, they are living among the refugees and are often indistinguishable from them, since many no longer wear uniform. It seems to be their intention to regain power in Rwanda and there are reports of continuing military activity by them along the Zairian/Rwandese border in Kanganiro and Kamanyola. However, they have not so far been as significant a factor for insecurity in the camps as have the militia.

10. The militia have a significant presence in the camps in the Goma area, where they control access into and out of the camps and resort openly to intimidation and force to stop refugees who are inclined to return to Rwanda. Like the Rwandese government forces personnel, they possess firearms, as the Zairian authorities were unable to disarm all the Rwandese government forces and militia personnel when they sought refuge in Zaire in July 1994. They also possess vehicles and communication equipment. It is difficult to determine their exact number as they neither wear uniform nor carry any insignia that would distinguish them from the rest of the refugee population. However, an estimate of their number can be made by reference to the militia's pre-war organization. Each of the 147 communes in Rwanda had between 100 and 150 organized militia, which would represent a total of between 14,700 and 22,050 personnel. Allowing for war attrition, this number may have fallen as low as 10,000 when the refugee camps were established but, in view of the political activity in the camps, it could have risen since that time.

11. There is little information available on the former Presidential Guard, which is estimated to consist of 800 men located in both Goma and Bukavu. There are reports that it may be housed in clandestine camps.

B. Factors impeding repatriation

12. In August and early September, an estimated 200,000 refugees returned to Rwanda. This movement, however, was interrupted by the activity of militia and political leaders opposed to voluntary repatriation. Since September, the number of refugees returning home has fallen drastically, although small numbers of refugees continue to trickle back to Rwanda in spite of threats by the

militia and dissuasion by political leaders. During the same period, some 400,000 refugees of mainly Tutsi origin, many of whom had been in exile in Uganda and Burundi for decades, have returned to Rwanda and, in many cases, settled on land belonging to those who have fled most recently, thus creating another problem relating to property rights. The Government has set up a land commission to resolve that problem but it is unable to provide alternative solutions for those refugees, because of a lack of funds.

13. The refugees' fear of reprisals by the Government for atrocities committed against Tutsis and moderate Hutus seems to be another main reason for their hesitancy about returning to Rwanda. While this fear has been exacerbated by efforts on the part of political leaders, Rwandese government forces elements and militia to dissuade the refugees from returning home, it also appears to be rooted in the history of the relationship between Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda. In expressing their distrust of the Government, refugees have also indicated a desire for their security to be guaranteed by a neutral body or for their own leaders to participate in the new Government.

14. In the light of the above, the UNAMIR technical team sought the views of the political and military leaders in the camps on conditions that would enable them to allow refugees the freedom of choice to return to Rwanda. These conditions included negotiations with the new Government; involvement of the exiled leadership in all negotiation processes; involvement of the United Nations in facilitating negotiations between the Government and the leadership in exile; revival of acceptable elements of the Arusha Accord; power-sharing; setting up of an international tribunal that would address not only the atrocities and acts of genocide committed after the events of 6 April 1994, but also alleged massacres committed by forces of the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) since 1990; organization of early elections; security guarantees, especially for the safe return of all refugees; and guarantees for the repossession by the refugees of their property.

III. MEASURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SECURE CONDITIONS IN THE CAMPS

A. Initial measures

15. In response to a request from the Government of Zaire, consideration has been given, in consultation with UNHCR, to measures aimed at providing immediate, but temporary, assistance to the Zairian security forces in protecting humanitarian operations in the camps. These measures would promote bilateral arrangements between the Government of Zaire and other Governments for the deployment of security experts to train and monitor the local security forces. An assessment mission would formulate recommendations on the number of security experts required and their organization, management and modus operandi. The mission would also estimate the financial support to be provided to the local security forces.

16. In this connection, it is relevant that UNHCR is already assisting the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to strengthen its local capacity to provide security in the camps through the provision of incentives and

logistic support. An assessment of the additional support that the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania may require in this regard will be made as soon as possible. Such measures would not, by themselves, be sufficient to address the more difficult problems in the camps in Zaire. If adopted in Zaire, they would need to be taken in conjunction with and in support of one of the options described below.

17. Efforts to improve security in the camps should also be supported by a public information campaign that would provide factual information on the situation both in the camps and in Rwanda. To this end, as indicated in my report of 6 October, UNAMIR is building a broadcasting capacity that can reach the camps. However, the Government of Rwanda has yet to grant the necessary authorizations for UNAMIR to begin broadcasting and for a frequency allocation. It is important that these authorizations should be forthcoming soon.

B. Deployment of a United Nations peace-keeping operation

18. In order to improve security, one option would be to deploy a United Nations peace-keeping force to the camps in Zaire, with the consent of the Government of Zaire, as is the established practice for such operations. The task of such a force would be to provide security for international relief workers, protection for the storage and delivery of humanitarian assistance and safe passage to the Rwandese border for those refugees who wish to return. From the border, UNAMIR troops would then provide assistance in returning the refugees to their home communities. Such a force would have a mandate separate from that of UNAMIR but would be under the operational control of, and supported logistically by, UNAMIR.

1. First phase

19. In the first phase, two well-trained and well-equipped mechanized battalions would spearhead the operation in the camps north of Lake Kivu. Each battalion would establish secure areas within large camp sites, providing safe conditions for the refugees in those areas. The force would establish screening procedures to keep weapons out of the secure areas. Humanitarian assistance operations would be intensified within these secure areas. The aim during this first phase would be to create conditions conducive to the voluntary repatriation to Rwanda of as many refugees as possible from each secure area. This, of course, would depend on the establishment within Rwanda of conditions under which the refugees could return to their homes in safety and dignity.

20. Within each secure area, local security units would be formed and trained to take over the security functions being performed by the peace-keeping force when reasonably secure conditions were deemed to have been created. At that time, the United Nations contingents would move forward to create similar secure areas in other locations. In planning such movement, consideration would be given to the likely impact of ongoing operations on conditions and attitudes in the camps that were to be secured in subsequent operations.

21. The local security units would include guards from either the Zairian security forces or former Rwandese gendarmerie present in the camps (who were proved not to have been involved in the atrocities), depending upon the situation in the particular area. Security experts, as envisaged in paragraph 15 above, would be made available (either as United Nations civilian police or through a private security firm) to train and monitor the local units in carrying out their security duties. The requisite equipment and financial assistance would also be provided for the local security units. The intention would be to ensure that the local security unit in each area would be capable of providing reasonable security, under the supervision of a minimal number of United Nations personnel, until the remaining refugees could be repatriated during the second phase of the operation, after which the area would be closed.

2. Second phase

22. In the second phase, lightly equipped motorized units would be deployed in the areas rendered secure during the first phase. Their main task would be to escort refugees to the Rwandese border and, in the meantime, to ensure that these areas continued to enjoy secure conditions. In this phase, self-contained company groups would be deployed to each secure area, cumulatively reaching battalion level. As the areas were closed upon completion of repatriation, each company group would be rotated to another secure area which was ready to move into the second phase.

23. Under this option, it is estimated that a force of 3,000 all ranks would be required. A parallel operation, launched simultaneously in the area south of Lake Kivu, where conditions are marginally better, could have a stabilizing effect on Burundi where the situation is still very fragile. To conduct such an operation, an additional 2,000 troops would be required.

24. After progressively establishing security in the camps both north and south of Lake Kivu, the mechanized battalions would be withdrawn from the force. The second phase units would also be gradually withdrawn as secure areas were closed down. This operation would be fully coordinated with the measures for strengthening security conditions in the camps mentioned in paragraph 15 above.

25. The incremental approach to establishing security proposed under this option is unavoidable as the dimensions of the problem are such as to make it impossible to address all refugee camps at the same time. Depending on the situation in the camps and the rate of repatriation, it is estimated that, given a force strength of 3,000 all ranks, it would take 24 to 30 months to complete the operation. However, with the additional 2,000 troops mentioned in paragraph 23, it is estimated that the duration of the operation could be reduced by about 10 months.

C. Action under Chapter VII of the Charter

26. The option outlined above does not provide for the separation of the political leaders, former Rwandese government forces troops and militia from the rest of the camp population, which, as indicated in my report of 6 October, is

considered to be the most effective way of ensuring the safety of refugees and their freedom to exercise their right to return to Rwanda. That report also noted that the Government of Zaire had expressed its commitment to addressing the refugee crisis and to improving security in the camps. To this end, it has indicated that the military and militia elements could be moved to new camps at a distance from the present refugee camps. It has also indicated that it would prefer the political leadership of the former Government of Rwanda to be located in third countries, although they could stay in Kinshasa while awaiting relocation.

27. The political leaders, the military hierarchy of the Rwandese government forces and the militia have made evident their opposition to either their removal from Goma and Bukavu or their separation from the refugee population prior to an overall settlement of the conflict. It is difficult to determine how far these groups would resist attempts to relocate them. Given their expressed opposition, however, and their proven propensity for violence, it can be assumed that they would not move voluntarily and would be likely to use force to resist being moved.

28. Should it be decided to undertake the separation of former political leaders, military and militia, the operation would also be undertaken in phases. In the first phase, while the new camps were being prepared, a strong, well-trained and well-equipped force would be deployed inside the existing refugee camps with the initial mandate of ensuring the security of international relief workers and the delivery of humanitarian assistance. During the second phase, once the new camps were established, the former political leaders, Rwandese government forces personnel and militia would be moved to the new sites, on a voluntary basis if possible, with force being used only where voluntary separation was resisted.

29. The UNAMIR technical team visited several sites recommended by the Government of Zaire, most of them in remote locations. The team analysed in detail the logistic difficulties that would have to be overcome in order to move the political leaders, Rwandese government forces personnel and militia to these new camps. The team concluded that the camps would require considerable infrastructure repair (airfields, roads, buildings, etc.), which would take at least six months to complete from the date of commissioning.

30. Taking all these factors into consideration, especially the likelihood that forcible action would be required, it is evident that this would be a risky, complex and very expensive endeavour. Given the need to provide security in both the existing camps and in the new sites to which the Rwandese government forces personnel and militia would be moved, it is estimated that a force level of two brigade groups (10,000-12,000 men), operating under a Chapter VII mandate, would be required. A United Nations force could conceivably be established for this purpose, either linked to UNAMIR or, preferably, as a separate operation. However, it will be recalled how difficult it was for the United Nations to obtain the necessary troops for the expansion of UNAMIR. It is, thus, clear that the United Nations could not be assured of obtaining expeditiously the personnel required to establish a force capable of undertaking this operation. Should the Security Council favour the establishment of such an operation, it may therefore wish to authorize a Member State, or a group of

Member States, to take the lead in organizing it, using all necessary means to achieve the aims outlined above.

IV. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

31. The preceding section of this report has identified three major military options for tackling the problem of security in the camps, namely:

(a) A United Nations peace-keeping operation, set up in accordance with normal procedures, to establish security progressively in the camps, area by area, over a period of time;

(b) A United Nations force, set up under Chapter VII of the Charter, to separate the former political leaders, military personnel and militia from the ordinary refugee population of the camps, thereby ensuring their security;

(c) A multinational force, authorized by the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter but not under United Nations command, to carry out the functions set out in subparagraph (b) above.

Other measures which could be associated with any of the above options would be the provision of foreign security experts to train and monitor the local security forces and appropriate public information campaigns.

32. In considering the above options, it is important to bear in mind that any operation conducted without parallel efforts towards national reconciliation in Rwanda will be futile. Indeed, it might merely have the effect of intensifying extremist activities in the refugee camps in Zaire and also those in other countries bordering Rwanda. It is evident that national reconciliation will require both a political understanding between the former leadership of the country and the present Government and the establishment of conditions in the camps, and in Rwanda itself, conducive to the return of the refugees. Neither is imminent. Any operation that encouraged the repatriation of refugees who were then not able to return to their home communities would merely add to the 1.5 to 2 million persons who are already internally displaced persons inside Rwanda and should therefore be avoided.

33. I am convinced that the first step must be a determined effort by the international community to improve security in the Rwandese refugee camps, especially those in Zaire. On the basis of the information provided by my Special Representative and of the preparatory work undertaken by the Secretariat, I feel that the peace-keeping operation envisaged above (paragraph 31 (a)) may be, under the present circumstances, the most realistic way of achieving a progressive improvement of security in the camps. This will be a difficult, complex and, to some extent, unprecedented enterprise. Should the Security Council favour such an approach, it would be essential that Member States be prepared to provide, in a timely manner, the full human, financial and logistic resources which would be required to carry it out effectively.

34. In determining the measures that need to be taken, the Security Council may wish to keep in mind that establishing security in the refugee camps must be

seen as only the first step in an overall strategy to establish long-term security and durable peace in Rwanda. A two-pronged approach must be adopted of addressing security issues in the camps and, at the same time, helping the Government to create conditions in Rwanda under which large-scale repatriation and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced people can take place. This twin approach is the only means of achieving the environment necessary for national reconciliation and sustainable peace.

35. The Government must assume its responsibilities for establishing the conditions necessary for the return of refugees to Rwanda in safety and dignity. However, in the wake of the cataclysm that has overtaken Rwanda, it finds itself without even the minimal resources to run an administration, much less reconstruct a shattered country and nation. The Government has indicated its commitment to creating conditions for the safe repatriation of refugees and has requested assistance from the international community for this purpose. This will require the rehabilitation of the basic economic and social infrastructure. Measures to be taken inside Rwanda must include the establishment of a fair and effective judicial system and the issue of property rights. As mentioned above, large numbers of longer-term refugees are returning to Rwanda and, in some cases, are occupying the land of those who have recently fled. The Government needs immediate and major financial and technical assistance from the international community to reintegrate the earlier refugees who are now returning and to ensure that those who recently left the country are able to reclaim their properties upon their return.

36. The Government and the international community must be equally committed to cooperating with one another in ensuring that special measures are taken in regard to security, the maintenance of law and order, the administration of justice, economic and social rehabilitation and national reconciliation for the benefit of all Rwandese, especially in those communities to which refugees and displaced people will return. In this regard, about 60 human rights monitors have been deployed in the country to monitor the conditions of returning refugees and internally displaced people. Furthermore, UNAMIR is planning to deploy political affairs officers to its five sectors of operation, specifically to assist the Government, through the local administrations, in promoting national reconciliation and re-establishing civil administration and to facilitate coordination between the activities of UNAMIR and those of other United Nations agencies and programmes.

37. As noted in my report of 6 October, it is fully recognized how difficult it is for the Government to undertake nation-building activities when it suffers from a severe lack of basic resources, including cash reserves. While the international community is calling on it to undertake such activities, the Government is becoming increasingly frustrated with the international community's slow pace in providing the resources necessary for it to do so. Furthermore, there are signs that the security situation in the country is becoming unstable as the Government is not in a position to strengthen local civil administrations or even to pay the salaries of its army. As a result, there is increasing tension between the Rwandese military and UNAMIR and incidents obstructing UNAMIR's ability to carry out its mandate are becoming more frequent. It is therefore essential for the international community to provide immediate assistance to the Government so that it can, for its part,

take the measures necessary to help improve the situation in the country and create the conditions necessary to encourage refugees to return.

38. My Special Representative has formulated and presented to potential donors a Rwanda emergency normalization plan, outlining areas in which such assistance is urgently required. At the request of the Government of Rwanda, UNDP has begun consultations with the donor community leading to a round-table meeting designed to establish a policy framework and to formulate reconstruction and rehabilitation requirements, a process that should also assist the international community to identify areas requiring immediate response. Finally, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs is preparing a new consolidated inter-agency appeal which will cover both continuing emergency requirements and short-term rehabilitation needs. The international community is urged to respond in an adequate and timely manner to these initiatives as part of a comprehensive approach to the problem of Rwanda. In this connection, I would like to recall that, pursuant to Security Council resolution 925 (1994), a trust fund has been established to finance humanitarian relief and rehabilitation programmes in Rwanda. The Trust Fund could serve as a useful conduit for contributions to meet the immediate needs of the Government of Rwanda.

39. Given the crucial importance of establishing secure conditions in the Rwandese refugee camps in Zaire, as well as the pressing need for financial and technical assistance to reach the Government of Rwanda, it is my intention to concentrate all the efforts of the United Nations system on these immediate priorities. Once progress has been made on these two fronts, I shall work with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to address the wider problems of the subregion.

40. The first step in that direction will be the convening of the regional conference on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in the Great Lakes region, which was decided upon by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU at its thirtieth ordinary session, held at Tunis in June 1994. This conference was recently endorsed by the General Assembly (resolution 49/7) and is to be jointly organized by OAU and UNHCR at Bujumbura in the near future.

41. I believe that, at a later stage, a broader conference should be convened jointly by the United Nations and OAU to address a range of political and other issues, including national reconciliation and land-related questions, in order to identify long-term solutions which will ensure peace, security and development in the subregion. Work has begun in the Secretariat to define the scope and modalities of such a conference and I have asked my Special Humanitarian Envoy, Mr. Robert Dillon, who is currently visiting the region, to explore the matter with the countries concerned.